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ABSTRACT

The use of computerized concordances in second language teaching is discussed, drawing on the results of a study undertaken in a teaching seminar. In the study, a corpus of 401 English sentences from electronic mail (e-mail) texts written by American pupils to a German school were analyzed with an electronic concordancer and compared with 326 sentences from an English textbook commonly used in the schools. Analysis indicates that the e-mail texts: contained many verbs expressing liking and disliking, and infinitive constructions; contained many modifying constituents; and showed preferred use of "I am" instead of "I'm." It is concluded that the language of e-mail texts represents a variant that is part of the modern world but generally neglected in the foreign language classroom, and that use of concordances allows students to gain colloquial English, learn how to use it in social contexts, and learn in an explorative fashion, developing awareness of underlying structures and communicative functions. Contains eight references. (MSE)

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LMC_Engl.Eng
= a WORD PERFECT-file!

LMC_Engl.ETX
= an ASCII-file!

Birgit Conrad, Heike Rautenhaus

ED 382 023

Innovations in Teachers' Education: Using the Concordancer as a Means for Students at University and at School Level

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1. Introduction

1.1. The seminar at the Carl von Ossietzky-University in Oldenburg

In summer 1992, students of the Carl von Ossietzky-University in Oldenburg had undertaken some comprehensive research on the integration of electronic mail in foreign language teaching. The results can be summed up as follows[1]:
E-mail is a medium which enhances the possibilities of teaching English enormously. The problems, however, the foreign language teachers encounter in their daily teaching boil down to the methodological skill demanded from teachers when planning new teaching units around given e-mail material, without the certifying support of detailed teaching guides from the publishers of textbooks. The question which teachers often cannot answer is how to use the e-mail texts which they receive, in constructive ways, going beyond asking pupils merely to read, discuss and maybe answer them, yet supporting the prescribed curriculum. In general, this means how to integrate them into daily teaching routines.

[1] cp. Rautenhaus (Ed.) 1993

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Here was the starting point for the seminar taught at the Carl von Ossietzky-University in the winter semester of 1993/94. The aim was to improve the flexibility and creativity of the student-teachers, with respect to teaching methods in foreign language teaching. It is important to prevent the traditional models of teaching from degenerating into stale routines which make innovations impossible. It is hoped to create new traditions, starting with student-teachers, so that the future generation of teachers can establish a new reality of foreign language teaching.
Therefore the following (cognitive and affective) aims were set for the seminar:

- identification of the possible functions, forms and effects of teaching materials which teachers themselves prepare
- knowledge of general and specific techniques for organization and development of foreign language teaching materials
- development of a general readiness, even perhaps the "fun" of taking the trouble to prepare one's own materials.

Comprehensive resources of literature, hardware and software were prepared for the students to use. The students worked in groups studying the following topics: the development of worksheets, overhead projector transparencies, posters, games and concordances and the usage of CD-ROMs, Desk Top Publishing programs, authoring programs like STORY CORNER and TOPIC and other programs like LMC and TEACHWARE. The results have been collected and printed[2].

In this paper we deal with the results in reference to concordances.

1.2. **The integration of electronic mail in foreign language teaching**

Telecommunication is integrated into foreign language teaching in order to create realistic communication situations for the language acquisition process. It means the use of computers, linked with telephone systems via modems and mailboxes, allowing written communication in English between pupils of any age, "across the whole world" and on any subject wanted. The transmission of the messages happens within minutes; the addressee can collect his mail at any time. It can be stored, edited or exploited in many other ways electronically and does not necessarily need paper.
In order to satisfy the different age and achievement levels, electronic mail can be done on different linguistic levels. Pupils introduce each other and chat about their hobbies or any shallow topic, but they also can discuss very seriously problems like the Gulf war or the holocaust. The contents are not prescribed but determined by the pupils themselves.
In the same way the teaching aims vary; they range from the situational improvement of vocabulary and structure fluency to reading ability, text production, factual knowledge about the country dealt with and cultural understanding[3]. Only occasionally does grammar feature as an aim in the work using e-mail.
By the linguistic research done in Oldenburg in 1992, it was demonstrated that the language with which pupils are confronted by e-mail is a necessary complement to the often dry, mostly descriptive and not very up-to-date textbooks; it is more idiomatic, more

[2] cp. Rautenhaus (Ed.) 1994b
[3] cp. Rautenhaus 1994

communicative, more genuine, authentic and concrete and therefore meets the interest of the pupils in a very special way[4].
These results will be verified by the first concordances we present in this paper. In part 2.1. we will point out some typical linguistic features of e-mail-texts and compare these with their occurrences in textbook-texts.
In part 2.2. we will demonstrate some ways of integrating concordances in the foreign language classroom at school level. Concordances make the regularities of a language transparent and make it possible for the pupil to discover the underlying rules. The pupils learn inductively; they work with language material which had been unaccessible to them and in a way that fosters independent discovery learning.

1.3. **The concordancer LMC**

The Longman Mini Concordancer (LMC) is a tool to search through electronically stored texts. The textcorpora can (1) be typed in, (2) be supplied by scanner (transforming texts from print into electronically readable form), (3) be taken from data bases (Minitel in France, Campus 2000 in England), or can (4) be taken from CD-ROMs. The amounts of text which LMC can investigate in one go is limited to 50.000 words, which, on the other hand, has the advantage of a quick searching process.
LMC offers a variety of possibilities to study the occurrence of a word or a combination of words in a text. You can get frequency or alphabetical wordlists. The option 'wild card' allows the searching for special morphemes or parts of words, such as suffixes like **ish*, **ity*, **ible*. In any case the found structures will be presented within their context, with the search word in the center of the line. You can sort the concordances in various ways, as we will exemplify later on (cp. chapter 2.2). Concordances can be printed and/or saved.

1.4 **The investigated texts**

The texts searched through are e-mail-texts and a textbook-text. The e-mail texts were written by American pupils to a German Gymnasium in Aurich in 1992, as part of an AT&T learning network circle. We combined these texts into one file, now containing 401 sentences. The textbook-text comes from 'Green Line 5', a textbook used in the 5th year of English language teaching at German Gymnasien. It contains 326 sentences from dialogues[5]. In order to make both corpora comparable, the results of our research shall be given in percent.

2. **Relevant Concordances**

2.1. **E-mail-texts in comparison with textbook-texts**

2.1.1. E-mail-texts include a lot of verbs expressing *liking* and *disliking* as well as *to*-infinitive-constructions

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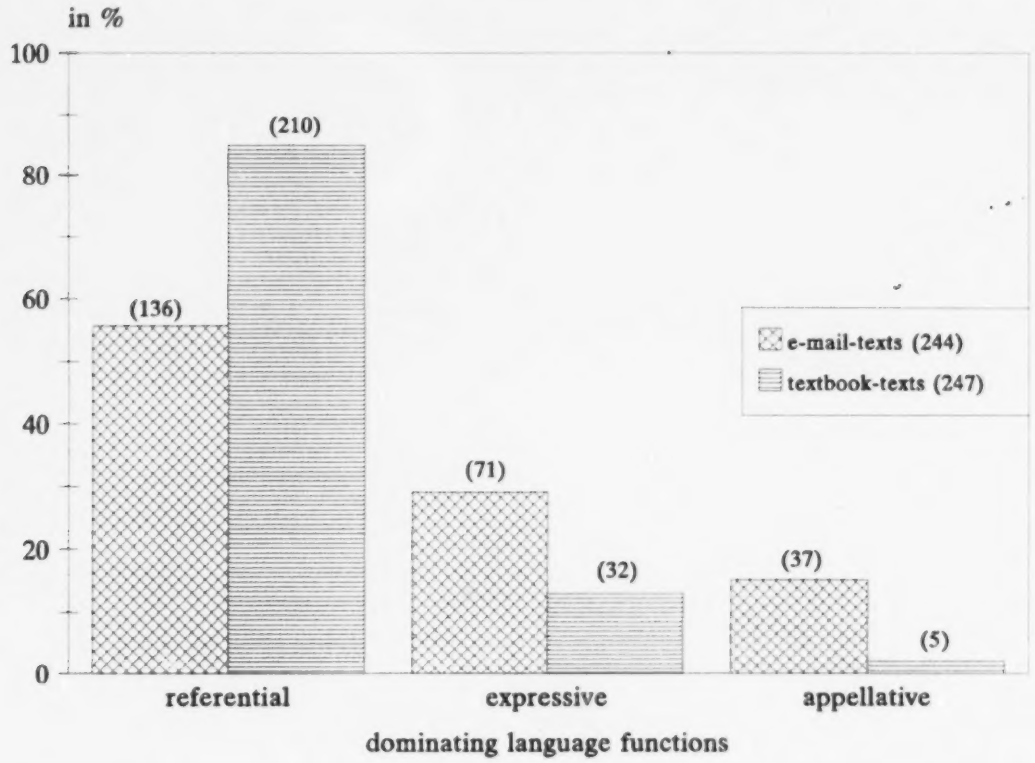
[4] cp. Rautenhaus 1993b
[5] We chose dialogues because the e-mail-letters also are dialogues in written form.

In the frame of the investigations of 1992 mentioned above, **Claudia Sporea** dealt with the occurrences of dominant speech functions in e-mail-texts and in textbook-texts. She presented her results in the following figure:



The illustration shows the differences in occurrence of the dominant speech functions in both types of corpora. Both types of texts follow the same pattern. The principal speech function is the referential (Darstellungsfunktion), followed by the expressive (Ausdrucksfunktion) and then the appellative (Appellfunktion). However, in the textbook-texts (Lehrbuch-Texte) the referential function occurs roughly 30% more often than in the e-mail-texts (85% vs. 55.7%). In the e-mail-texts the proportions are more balanced. Whereas in the e-mail-texts the expressive and appellative function comprise 44.3% of the total occurrence (exp.= 29.1%, app.=15.2%), in textbook-texts they constitute only 15% of the total occurrence (exp.= 13%, app.= 2%). It is interesting that the occurrence of the appellative function here is extremely rare.

This means: By e-mail-texts pupils do not only learn how to describe something, but also how to express themselves and how to influence their communication partners, in short: *How to do something with words*[6].

[6] cp. Austin 1962

In the context of concordancing the same set of texts, Claudia Sporea's results led us to the following hypothesis: E-mail texts are rich of verbs that refer to a state of mind or feeling.
In fact, using LMC we found the verbs *love, like, hate and enjoy*[7] in the textbook-corpus with a frequency of only 0.1 %, but in the e-mail-corpus with a frequency of 1%.
We also did concordances on *to*-infinitive constructions, as, according to Leech/Svartvik, *to*-infinitive constructions are typical for expressing emotions, intentions and aims[8]. The result: The e-mail-corpus has a *to*-frequency of 33.7%, the textbook-corpus has one of only 17.2%. Both corpora use *to* in two ways: *To* serves as a preposition as well as part of a *to*-infinitive construction. Look at the following concordance No. 1:

1. *E-mail*-corpus:

Concordance for "to" (135 lines)

(1)	selves, some day my kids will not be able	to ski or do sports. ---------- Begin Atta
(2)	e but no girls soccer. Girls are allowed	to play on the team. In the winter basketball an
(3)	so only one, the best pumpkin, is allowed	to develop on each vine. This is the secret for
(4)	get results from Ohio and Kansas already	to their little Dating (Culture) questionnaire.
(5)	re 13 students in this class--all anxious	to hear from everyone. We have decided to go ahe
(6)	logy students and I are extremely anxious	to get started. There are 13 students in this
(7)	then I quit. John can't think of anything	to ask you so we will talk to ya soon!! Jeff S
(8)	I haven't gotten a job yet but I applied	to a few places yesturday. I hate working! I wor
(9)	ing on over our line that my count is apt	to be way off in some cases. I am so proud of ou
(10)	students in it. We have sports available	to us through the school. During the fall season
(11)	at. It does here. We dont want to go back	to class yet so we will talk longer. Ha!Ha! Hows
(12)	BY... for now may be we could right back	to each other.....! maybe your new friend
(13)	ons for this curios holiday date way back	to the time of the Druids, who celebrate the New
(14)	ft. Alicia is very anxious for basketball	to start. This is her sport and she loves to pla
(15)	's turnip. The name pumpkin id believed	to be derived from a Greek word, pepon, or Latin
(16)	uins for hockey. I listen to T.L.C., Boys	to Men, House of Pain, Kris Kross, and lots mo
(17)	T.L.C. and Def Leppard, I also like Boys	to Men and lots more. I am also 14. My favorit
(18)	Digital Underground, Young M.C., Boyz	to Men, TLC, and many others. Now here is Sha
(19)	much space that few gardeners choose	to plant the vines. They leace growing these pla
(20)	i and we are the students chosen	to communicate with your school. Brief update: A

Among these first 20 sentences, representing the complete e-mail concordance of 135 lines, *to* is used as a preposition in line 4, 8, 10-13, 16-18. All other lines use *to* as part of an infinitive construction and express therefore emotions, intentions and aims. The statistics of the whole e-mail-text show that 67.4% of the *to*-sentences use *to* within an infinitive construction, only 32.6% as a preposition. This statistical analysis supports the results of Claudia Sporea.

2.1.2. E-mail-texts are full of modifying constituents

In the frame of the investigations of 1992, **Frauke Vuß** had dealt with the vocabulary of e-mail-texts. She found numerous colloquialisms which she separated into sub-categories in order to demonstrate the frequency of the different lexical and syntactic structures. The results of her investigation can be summed up briefly: The letters exchanged by e-mail are full of colloquial English in all areas of language. Aside from noun phrases the most productive category of colloquialism is figurative language, which shows the pupils' creativity when dealing with language: Idioms like: *We shop till we drop* and *She has two*

[7] cp. Leech/Svartvik 1975, § 124
[8] cp. Leech/Svartvik 1975, § 203 and 321

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pain in the butt sisters, metaphors like *We are still having such a ball* and *We left him drip dry* and similes like *typing like hell*. Especially important are intensifying expressions like *I sure wish* and *and boy, was it...* or the fillers *well*, *kind of*, *sort of* etc., as well as the indication of the writer's mood by *What a life (smile)* from the language of the comics. In the sentence *I got this message in the morening - oops* - the writer uses an interjection to indicate the mistake in the preceding word instead of correcting it, which would have been easy with the computer. In this case the interjection is used to create a lively text. In this way the addressee can experience vicariously the writing process of the sender. Another interjection is the exclamation *Smashing* which expresses the enthusiasm of the writer.

The closer the pupils get to one another, the more the language of their letters change. Colloquial expressions make their letters more lively and more personal. The teenagers write about all topics using colloquial language with which they evidently feel most comfortable. Apparently it is of no consequence whether the topic is personal or otherwise, although naturally the tone of a letter about the Gulf war or homeless people is more sober than a description of leisure activities.

While English textbooks strictly avoid colloquial English and only use formal English, e-mail-letters contain colloquial expressions and open a new field of English to the pupils. In grappling with the colloquial English found in the American letters, the German pupils enrich their passive vocabularies. And the German letters show that they not only understand informal expressions, but that they also use them.

So one can state that e-mail is a useful addition to conventional English lessons because it helps to improve the pupils' ability to understand the everyday English language. New vocabulary is learned which can be actively implemented; and the pupils have shown that they do so in their effort to communicate with their American counterparts.

In order to support these results from Fraucke Vuß, we used LMC for investigating the occurrence of words which belong to familiar speech: "Some adjectives and adverbs have little meaning apart from their emotive force", for example *really* and *pretty*. *Really* is used in our e-mail-corpus with a frequency of 1.5%, but only with one of 0.3% in the textbook-corpus. Compare the concordances No. 2 and No. 3:

2. *E-mail*-corpus:

Concordance for "really" (7 lines)

(1)? That must be fun!! I think football is	really	cool and I love pizza. Do you drive? If y
(2)t I quit. Anyway, everyone thought it was	really	cool that everyone got a message from you
(3)e call her Cricket. I wear glasses but I	really	don't need them.
(4)he sing Christian music Acapello. They're	really	excellent! I am pretty tall, have brown h
(5)lately? The movies are cool but they are	really	expensive here ($7.50). John likes footba
(6) KAYS program. It must make you feel	really	great after you do something to help peop

3. Textbook-corpus:

Concordance for "really" (1 line)

(1)go back through the tunnel. Now we're	really	stuck. Robbo: Will it, .. will it fill

The use of *pretty* as an intensifier, or in its premodifying function, is restricted to our e-mail corpus. Here it has a frequency of 1%, details are given in concordance No. 4. In the textbook-corpus it does not appear at all.

4. *E-mail*-corpus:

Concordance for "pretty" (4 lines)

(1)oing out. Halloween in Rocky Point gets	pretty	crazy every year. Groups of kids go aroun
(2)I like basketball a lot and I think I am	pretty	good at it if I do say so myself. My fa
(3) My halloween's were	pretty	illegal. Certain parties would get loaded
(4)Acapello. They're really excellent! I am	pretty	tall, have brown hair and blue eyes. I am

These results show, again, the emotional and informal use of language in e-mail.

2.1.3 E-mail texts prefer the long form *I am* instead of the short form *I'm*

E-mail-texts are letters and consequently very personal in style; they make frequent use of the personal pronoun *I*. In the e-mail-corpus it occurs with a frequency of 9.2%. In the textbook-corpus *I* has a frequency of only 2.5%. A closer look at the usage of *I* shows the alternate forms *I am* and *I'm*. In the *e-mail* corpus, *I am* occurs with a frequency of 78,4%, the short form *I'm* only with one of 21.6%. Compare the concordances of *I* in No. 5:

5. *E-mail*-corpus:

Concordance for "i am" (29lines)

(1) to Lynne B. My name is Leinetta Evans.	I am	the Gvovernment, Sociology, Health and Phys
(2)own has a small community. The class that	I am	in is Mr. Frizzell's chemistry class and th
(3)class and there are 11 kids in the class.	I am	17 years old and I am a senior in high scho
(4)kids in the class. I am 17 years old and	I am	a senior in high school. The things that I
(5)e a letter telling you a little about who	I am	and the area I live. I percived this as imp
(6)ehem, NH in the United States of America.	I am	eighteen years of age and will graduate fr
(7)akes and spiders. I go to Schalmont High.	I am	15 years old. My favorite subject is Social
(8)Studies. Volleyball is my favorite sport.	I am	on our JV Team. I love horseback riding and
(9)I love horseback riding and agriculture.	I am	Shannon Winner. I'm 15, I have brown hair.
(10)I am Kristen Schlansker.	I am	a competative gymn
(11)ymnastics, skiing, swimming, and sailing.	I am	a good student who likes to learn. I am sho
(12)I am a good student who likes to learn.	I am	short with blond hair and brown eyes. I lov
(13)Hi. I am Peter Darling.	I am	from NY, and I go to Schalmont High. I like
(14)music Acapello. They're really excellent!	I am	pretty tall, have brown hair and blue eyes.
(15)etty tall, have brown hair and blue eyes.	I am	also smart. I like to collect coins and oth
(16)High School in Bethelhem, New Hampshire.	I am	16 years old and in the eleventh grade. I w
(17)m high school in the year 1994. Right now	I am	in Mr. Frizzles' chemistry class which has
(18)the school. During the fall season, right	I am	playing field hockey. I play the position o
(19)Hello: Mattew Hultgren Hi	I am	Jennifer Weaver am 14 teen am in 9th garde
(20)out there, Hi my name is Mike Furnari and	I am	15. My favorite sport is football. My secon
(21)count is apt to be way off in some cases.	I am	so proud of our gabby circle--I'll bet we w
(22)tt, Hello. My name is Charlene Jackman.	I am	14. My birthday is in nine days. I will b
(23)they are also green and blue sometimes.	I am	exactally five feet tall. I like the Lakers
(24)the time my eyes eyes are blueish gray.	I am	about five feet two inches tall. Maybe fi
(25)I also like Boys to Men and lots more.	I am	also 14. My favorite author is Stephen King
(26)is Shannon too! Let me describe myself.	I am	about 6 feet tall and weigh about 175 po
(27)et tall and weigh about 175 pounds but	I am	not fat. I have brown eyes and black hair.
(28)ot fat. I have brown eyes and black hair.	I am	16 years old I like basketball a lot and
(29)old I like basketball a lot and I think	I am	pretty good at it if I do say so myself.

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Concordance for "i'm" (8 lines)

(1)ing and agriculture.	I'm	15, I have brown hair. I don't like school
(2)t's Aimee. In softball I play left field.	I'm	not that great at the game. I just started p
(3) Hello! Jeff Shepard, this is Lisa Myers.	I'm	15 years old. I go to Schalmont High School.
(4) Which is in Schenectady New York.	I'm	in the nineth grade supppose to be in the te
(5)too but she is two years younger then me,	I'm	16. What's Office practice? We don't have th
(6) Whats up. My name is Shannon Engle and	I'm	from a hick town called West Jefferson. I
(7)rom a hick town called West Jefferson.	I'm	about 6'2 and 165 pounds. Iam also 16 and I
(8)later. He sounds boring doesnt he. Sike	I'm	just playing. Well we gotta go! SEE YA W

The preference of *I am* to *I'm* in the e-mail-corpus amazingly is not resembled in the textbook-corpus. The textbook uses the short form 100%, as shown in the following concordance No. 6

6. Textbook-corpus:

Concordance for "I'm" (8 lines)

(1) bo: He probably starved to deaths. Harry:	I'm	going to take a look at him. Won't be a se
(2) . We all thought it was a man at first.	I'm	jolly glad it's not, though. Harry: A
(3) o back the way we came. Robbo: Oh, no.	I'm	not crawling through the dark while Harry
(4) Harry Durden, you've done it this time.	I'm	going to fill you in. Harry: You'll have
(5) you. Harry: All right,-then, all right.	I'm	sorry. I didn't mean to worry you. Joyce
(6) Have a good time. Robbo: Hey, wait a bit	I'm	not hanging about' here by myself. Harry:
(7) e.7 Harry: You do what you like, Robbo.	I'm	going exploring. Joyce: It's going to r
(8) After a pause) Oh, all right, then, but	I'm	disappointed in you, Joyce. I thought you

Concordance for "I am" (1 line)

(1) o help, Harry. Harry: What does he think	I am?	I'll be voting in four years' time. Ro

The long form in *What does he think I am?* must not be interpreted as an alternative use of the short form. It rather emphasizes the main verb *to be*. Therefore, there is practically no use of the long form in the textbook-corpus.
The differences in usage between e-mail-text and textbook-text makes one wonder if the textbooks present the language to be studied in an adequate way. One can assume that the authors of the textbook preferred the short form *I'm* for didactic reasons in order to stress and practice the construction principally typical for spoken language. However, this way pupils get the impression that in written dialogues the short form is the only possible form. In order to achieve a more realistic presentation of the present-day usage of English in the classroom, foreign language textbooks should be supplemented by more authentic texts, such as e-mail-texts.

2.2. **Didactic considerations for foreign language teaching**

2.2.1. Starting point: the textbook of the pupils

The starting point for bringing in concordances into foreign language teaching can be the linguistic phenomenon which is to be studied, prescribed by the textbook or - in a wider sense - the curriculum relevant for the pupils in question. Concordances provide lists of words and the contexts in which they are used. From these the pupils can infer the linguistic principle underlying the prevailing patterns and formulate it with or without the help of the teacher. Comparing the result of the pupils' little investigation with the relevant paragraphs in their grammar-books (which might be the school grammar regularly used in the

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classroom or a more comprehensive grammar like Leech/Svartvic 1975), it can be tested, verified or corrected.

As an example, we come back to our findings on verbs that refer to a state of mind or feeling such as *like, hatė, love* and *enjoy* (as mentioned in 2.1.1.). These verbs can be followed alternatively by a *to*-infinitive construction or by a noun-phrase with or without *ing*-form. The LMC, using the *sort to right*-option, creates from the e-mail-corpus the concordances shown in No. 7. The pupils are asked to (1) recognize the alternative variants, (2) formulate the underlying linguistic principle, (3) find their own examples.

7. *E-mail*-Corpus:

Concordance for "like" (32 lines)

mple, a reward is given for a small deed,	like a traditional dance, a song or even the rea
ike the Lakers for basketball, I do not	like baseball, Miami Dolphins and ChicagoBears
yes and black hair. I am 16 years old I	like basketball a lot and I think I am pretty go
my boy Scott Davis. We just here chillin	like Bob Dylan and maxin' like Micheal Jackson i
groups are T.L.C. and Def Leppard, I also	like Boys to Men and lots more. I am also 14.
am from NY, and I go to Schalmont High. I	like classical and good Christian music. One of
hich can be miserable to people who don't	like cold weather and lots of snow but wonderful
d I also have hazel eyes no fooling. I	like football and Baseball. I love to bow hunt
rty, or I'll have a party myself. I don't	like going outside when it becomes really becaus
me German students here too! You said you	like going to the movies; what have you seen lat
My experience is from when I was child. I	like Halloween because it is a fun time for chil
ike the Lakers for basketball. I do not	like hockey, football or baseball. My favorite
or our cars and houses. I personally dont	like Holloween. Your better off staying inside u
rt too much!! Mechelle- That's cool you	like Metallica! Cristie- That's great that you
st here chillin like Bob Dylan and maxin'	like Micheal Jackson in this beautiful day in th
ost people in this area are self employed	like my parents are. We rely on tourists for our
ove to bow hunt for white tail deer. I	like rock and roll and country. Well Nick is mak
inner. I'm 15, I have brown hair. I don't	like school much, I have a half-sister named Kri
********** My name is Cliff. I	like sports, electronics, and building things. W
lots more. My favorite is Def Leppard. I	like Stephen King for a favorite author. I hav
times. I am exactally five feet tall. I	like the Lakers for basketball, I do not like
John wants to know what kind of fish you	like to catch? I think its neat that your here f
can cause havoc in other neighborhoods. I	like to cause a lot of distruction but a few tim
wn hair and blue eyes. I am also smart. I	like to collect coins and other foreign money. *
basketball, swim, horse back ride, and I	like to do a lot of things wel am going out for
senior in high school. The things that I	like to do the most are play sports and go out
square is our main business district. We	like to eat out and go to the movies, but the cl
ith her boyfriend also named Jon. We both	like to go out with our friends and party. When
that everyone is older, we do more stuff	like to our enemies and friends we dont like. Th
s tall. Maybe five feet three inches. I	like to play basketball. I like the Lakers for
ear we might move to North Carolin well I	like to play basketball, swim, horse back ride,
ling. What is your favorite sport? I also	like to ski in the winter and go to all the moun

Concordance for "love" (8 lines)

n short with blond hair and brown eyes. I	love animals and want to study them for a profes
Schlansker. I am a competative gymnast. I	love gymnastics, skiing, swimming, and sailing.
my favorite sport. I am on our JV Team. I	love horseback riding and agriculture. I am Shan
n!! I think football is really cool and I	love pizza. Do you drive? If ya do, what do you
here you live? Well we have to go now. We	love school. NOT!!!!!!!!!!! Peace in chicken
iction is a good snow fall this winter. I	love the fall the best with the beautiful colors
fooling. I like football and Baseball. I	love to bow hunt for white tail deer. I like
y main interest is tennis and football. I	love to watch professional tennis and profession

Concordance for "enjoy" (5 lines)

loween should be cancelled, most children	enjoy going out. Halloween in Rocky Point gets
play it. Nikki on the other hand doesn't	enjoy it as much, but she is a cheerleader for i
nd professional American football. I also	enjoy other sports such as track and skiing hiki
lots of snow but wonderful for those who	enjoy the outdoors and serenity that the winter
hobbies help to keep me active and let me	enjoy the picturesque scenary of our rural surro

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Concordance for "hate" (2 lines)

l me Lee, Lis, Kid and Country Pumpkin. I	hate snakes and spiders. I go to Schalmont High.
ut I applied to a few places yesturday. I	hate working! I worked at a restaurant for a whi

The pupils work in groups or with the help of the teacher and formulate:
V + NP, V + ing-clause, or *V + to + Inf.* The *V + NP*-constructions will not present any problems to the pupils. But they will have difficulties in finding the difference in the usage of the constructions *V + ing-clause* and *V + to + Inf.* Leech/Svartvik offer the solution: "The infinitive clause expresses an 'idea', while the ing-clause expresses a 'fact'."[9] The pupils can discuss the examples given by the concordance once more under this perspective.
This process will foster their language awareness and train them in data-driven learning. They can create their own hypotheses about the language they are studying and find their own ways of examining these. They can, for example, gain knowledge of word patternings, like verb complementation and phrasal verbs, they can compare the usage of synonyms, they can explore the cohesion elements of texts. They can do all this as soon as they have realized that the only thing they need is an authentic text-corpus, an easy-to-handle concordancer and a critical mind.

2.2.2. Starting point: the e-mail experience of the pupils

After an e-mail-phase the pupils often do not know what they have gained from the experience. They only know that they had more fun than in the traditional English classroom, and that is suspicious, because real learning has to hurt (as many people still think). In such a situation it would be helpful to make the pupils reflect on the special quality of that language they have been confronted with for quite some time.
We refer once more to the concordance No. 2 (cp. chapter 2.1.2.). In all the sentences, except sentence (3), *really* is preceded by a (pro)noun and a verb and followed by an adjective. The pupils can re-formulate the rule: *NP + V + really + Adj*. *Really* is used in its *premodifying or intensifying function* in front of adjectives. (In sentence (3) *really* modifies the whole utterance.) The pupils discover linguistic rules which they have learned already intuitively, the so-called naive rules, and feel reassured.
More astonishing the pupils will find, however, the occurrence of *pretty*. This they do not only find as an adjective - as usually in *pretty girl* - , but as an *intensifier* in front of an adjective, even in combination with adjectives which do not signify something pretty, such as *crazy* and *illegal*. Look at concordance No 4. (cp. chapter 2.1.2.) once more: The pupils discover, how colloquial the English is which they have been acquiring and using during their e-mail-phase. They gain a feeling for language variants and the places in which they appear.

2.2.3. Linguistic errors in e-mail texts

E-mail-texts are not free of linguistic errors, a fact which often is mentioned as a disadvantage of these texts. But errors also can be helpful, if they are integrated into the learning process on purpose and with care.

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[9] Leech/Svartvik 1975, § 324

Using concordances the pupils learn inductively; they discover linguistic regularities and deduce from these the underlying rules, as shown above. Errors stick out as not going with the rule. The classroom discussion can clarify, if there really is an error or an exception to the rule, so that there is more to learn. In unclear cases one could ask one of the native communication partners by e-mail. The finding of errors in native (or the pupils' own) texts can be understood as a helpful control if the learning objectives have been achieved. If the pupils discover errors they have understood the rule.

3. Summary

The language of e-mail-texts represents a variant which on the one hand is part of our modern world and on the other normally is neglected in the language classroom. The combination of the use of e-mail and concordances opens new ways of achieving a foreign language: The pupils gain not only the colloquial English and learn how to use it in social contexts, but they also learn in a new explorative way. They use their communicative abilities they have already acquired in order to recognize the structure of the language. This combination of automatic usage of the language and growing awareness of its underlying structures and communicative functions leads to the stable language competence that is the aim of any foreign language teaching.
Future teachers have to master the techniques of e-mailing and of concordancing as well as they have to understand the learner-as-researcher paradigm.

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